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CHAPTER MVIII



stared tentatively at the massive beast from the safety of the tree line. His matted fur rustled in the breeze, his eyes swirled, besotted on the jars of artisanal honey I had left out for him. Just behind him, in his den, I could see my prize: The stash of cloudy, juicy IPAs he had been charged with guarding from people like, well, me. It couldn't be this easy could it? I crept forward slowly and he turned his ursine muzzle towards me, sniffed the air and said, "GRRRooowzzzzzzzzzz" before falling promptly asleep. Well, easy it was I suppose...



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ON THE COVER



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HOBAN BRINGS KOREA TO UPTOWN!

In its one year of business, Hoban Korean BBQ has already proven itself as a staple to the uptown neighborhood providing patrons with Instagram-worthy dishes, a unique dining experience and the friendliest staff in town. From the moment you enter you'll find yourself immediately salivating from the aroma of grilled meats. The restaurant is beautifully designed with custom hood vents symmetrically placed above each table. The ambient lights encompass table after table of smiling faces with chopsticks in hand. Korean pop music, or Kpop, plays in the background and bottles of Soju are flowing. For those unfamiliar, Soju is a rice wine popularized in Korea and Hoban has a variety of flavors.

The servers play an important role at Hoban. While simultaneously serving, they also play the role of educators to their guests. Servers help to familiarize guests with the proper dining and drinking etiquette that one may experience in Korea. If it's your first time doing Korean BBQ, fear not, the staff is more than happy to coach you or even give you a hand if needed!

Hoban serves an eclectic crowd during dinner. The guests range from business clientele to group gatherings to couples enjoying date night. No matter the party, it seems that every table is almost blessed with a bottle of Soju and a table filled to the edge with a variety of dishes.

For those unfamiliar with Korean cuisine, the Wang Galbi (Marinated beef short ribs) and the Samgyeopsal (Thick strips of pork belly) are always safe bets. When you order two meats, your entire table receives a lettuce basket for your lettuce wraps and a variety of banchan. Banchan refers to the vegetable side dishes that are shared with the whole table, which includes the popular pickled kimchi. The side dishes are presented in small silver dishes that fill up the table. If you find yourself falling in love with any particular banchan and have the sudden urge to arm wrestle your tablemates over the last piece, don't worry! Hoban has you covered with free refills.

Once dinner comes to an end, Hoban gracefully transforms into a lively bar atmosphere with talented bartenders and a playlist that'll make anyone want to get up and dance. Hoban hosts a daily happy hour from 4-6pm and an all-day happy hour on Wednesdays. On Wednesdays, happy hour deals include \$1 Soju shots, \$2 rails, \$3 bottled beers and \$4 appetizers.

Hoban of Uptown operates from 4pm to 2am Tuesday through Sunday with last seating at 11pm on the weekdays and 11:30pm on the weekends. While Hoban Korean BBQ of Uptown stays up late to accommodate Uptown's restless bar scene, its' sister restaurant, Hoban Korean Restaurant of Eagan does last seating at 9pm daily. Though the restaurants provide different ambiances, both locations share the same tried-and-true recipes that have received years of praise and recognition.

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Five Watt will serve coffee, cocktails, and food in new Northeast location

Having firmly established itself as a southwest Minneapolis mainstay, Five Watt is heading north.

Northeast, to be precise, and into the Miller Textile Building. And, the Nicollet Avenue coffeeshop famous for cocktail-inspired coffee drinks (and for briefly putting its owner's face on the toilet paper), will be turning those cocktail-inspired drinks into actual cocktails.

According to the Journal, owners Lee Carter and Caleb Garn have secured a liquor license for their new East Hennepin Avenue operation. That means wine, beer, low-proof cocktails, and because you gotta serve snacks with those libations, some "made-to-order bar food." No details on the food yet, but they're going well beyond the bakery case of the south Minneapolis location.

Speaking of which, Southies, don't flip your wig; Five Watt's original location is staying put. You'll have all the same creative concoctions as before. We're partial to the Kingfield, a blend of vanilla, Big Watt coriander bitters, espresso, milk, and Black Hawaiian sea salt that's named after the flagship store's neighborhood. On an ever-changing menu, it's a sweet but not-too-sweet classic.

The new space will remedy some of the hustle and bustle of the south Minneapolis location, where finding a seat can mean darting your eyes and dashing when a table clears. This shop will seat 50 patrons in a comparatively sprawling 1,500 square feet.

Five Watt will open its Northeast location in October, the Journal reports. Five Watt's third location in St. Paul's upcoming Keg & Case Market is expected sometime in 2018.

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—HANNAH SAYLE



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Lenny Russo, former Heartland chef, will take the helm at The Commodore

Not even a year after shuttering his 14-year dining institution Heartland, chef Lenny Russo has found himself another gig.

This time, he'll be heading up the art deco wonder The Commodore, a stylish bar in the former Commodore Hotel, once home to F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald. Russo's wife, Mega Hoehn, will be brought on to direct the bar program.

Russo, a relentless pioneer of locavore eating in the Twin Cities, tells Minneapolis-St. Paul Magazine that his experience working under Commodore owner John Rupp in his early years at W.A. Frost helped convince him to take the job. "They were always really respectful and kind, and they gave me a lot of room," he tells Dara Moskowitz Grumdahl.

The Commodore opened in late 2015, with chef Chris Gerster behind the burners (no word on where Gerster will land next). The bar was widely considered to be the draw here; Christa Robinson's concoctions and the luxurious 1930s decor outshined the classic-if-overly-familiar American cookery coming out of the kitchen.

No doubt we'll begin to see Russo's influence on the menu starting this fall.

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—HANNAH SAYLE

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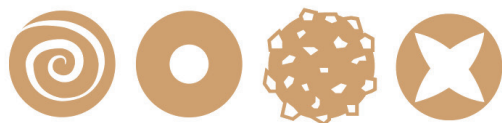
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Saunders, who also owns neighborhood favorite The Kenwood, has altered the space though not dramatically, letting the architecture and history of the building dictate the decor. The room is slightly anachronistic, like something out of *Mad Men*, but with a decidedly modern-day sensibility.

The Loring Park neighborhood has seen lots of change since the historic 510 Groveland Ave. building was erected in 1927. The structure itself maintains the aura of a different era, and the space has a certain history and patina that commands respect.

The staff is welcoming, not stuffy, but it still strikes you as a place where you put on your good manners. The host greeted us warmly and introduced himself by name (hi, Robert!) when we mentioned we lived in the neighborhood. Our waiter politely asked if he could show us the French way to eat mussels when he saw us wrenching the meaty morsels out with forks. (Use one of the consumed bivalves' shells as pinchers, and pluck the other mussels out of their shells.)

Saunders was smart about reinventing the space. The large dining room down the hall from the lounge will be used for private events. The main room of the lounge space is divided into drinking and dinner spaces, though you can enjoy the full menu in either area. The main difference is whether you eat at a dining table or sink comfortably into one of the luxuriously appointed seating areas.

The drinking space is dominated by the bar, now featuring very comfortable and stylish upholstered bar stools. It's the best place to see the skilled bartenders ply their trade, and maybe make a new friend or two. Whether you have a favorite cocktail or want something new, the bar staff will do right by you.

The French 75, one of the featured cocktails, can often be sickly sweet, but here is the perfect warm-weather libation, bracingly tart and lemony. The restaurant also boasts a varied wine list.

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If you are drinking with friends, opt for one of the plush lounge areas. We nabbed a cozy spot next to the fireplace. I have never belonged to a country club, but imagine it must be like this: just sitting and savoring, no one giving you the side eye like it's time to move along and give someone else your seat.

The menu has an entree section, but small plates are the way to go, sharing with your companions so you can try more dishes. The mussels pistou featured an abundance of green herbs and impeccable mussels. The fries, on the other hand, were confoundingly disappointing—a bit wilted and showing no signs of having met a salt shaker. The accompanying aioli was fabulous, however, satiny and just the right amount of garlicky; it almost made up for the fries.

This is definitely the place to go if you want to indulge in caviar. The menu offers five options—0- at different price points, so you can splurge no matter what your tax bracket.

And desserts here are as lovely as the surroundings.

Saunders has said that it was residents of the 510 building who encouraged him to take over the restaurant. It was a canny move on their part. It's like having a private dining room staffed by one of the best chefs in town.

Who wouldn't be thrilled to ride the elevator down to the first floor, or step in off the curb after a day's work, and find the 510 Lounge in your lobby?

THE 510 LOUNGE

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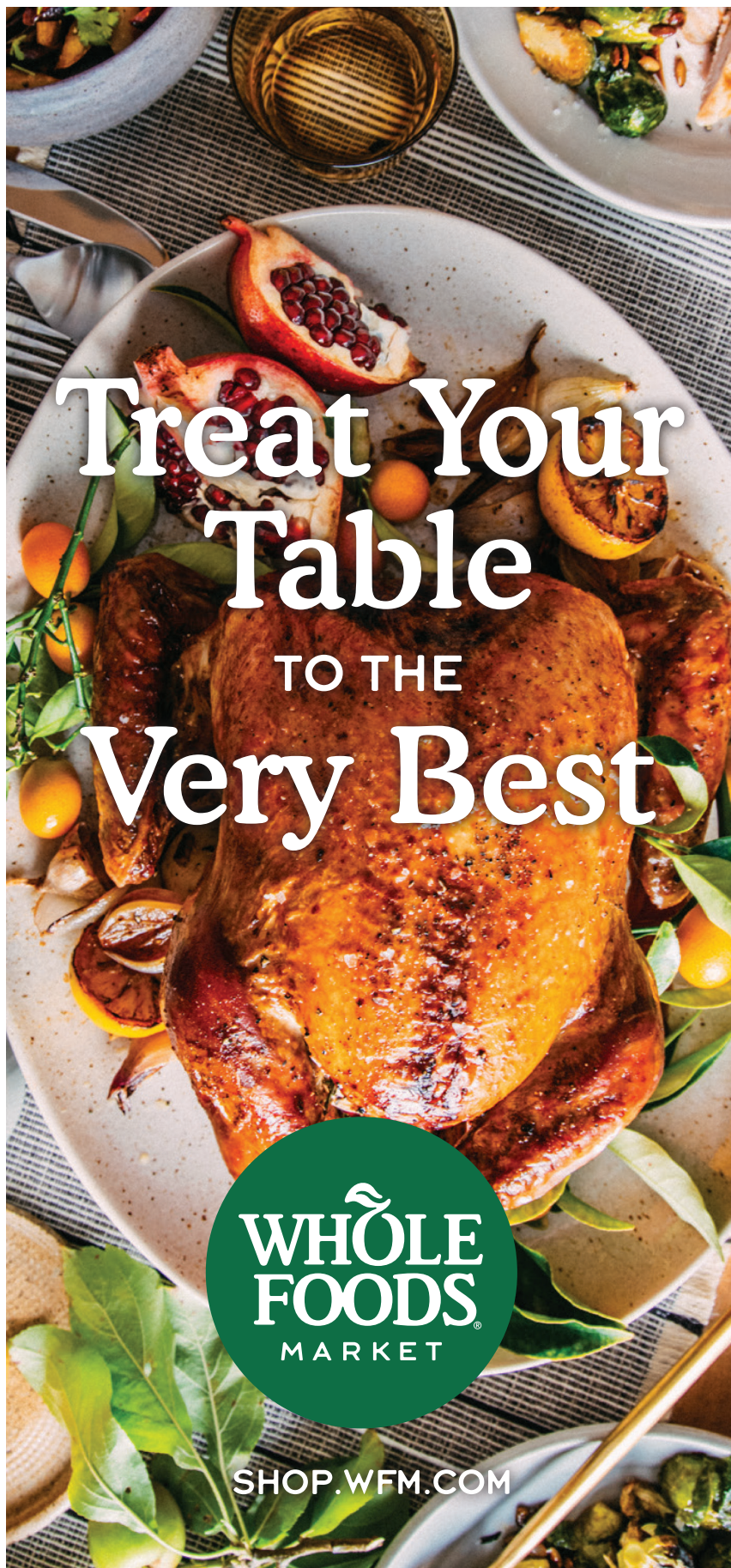
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to me at our favorite table in June. Oh, we're going to miss Lucia's so much."

They started flooding Facebook after the news broke in early October—the comments from longtime regulars shaken by the abrupt announcement. Memories of nights spent laughing with friends on the patio or fighting for space in the bustling wine bar. The anniversary dinners, the birthday drinks. First dates, first jobs.

After 32 years, Lucia's is closing. The last day of service was October 14.

That's a good run, by any standards, and especially in the ever-fickle restaurant industry. But if the recollections seem a little melodramatic, a little overly maudlin, well...it's just that it's hard to overstate what that little restaurant at 31st and Hennepin meant to this city.

"There wouldn't be a Birchwood if there hadn't been a Lucia's," Birchwood Cafe co-owner Tracy Singleton says simply.

Before she opened her Seward cafe—now 22 years old and an inspiration and institution in its own right—it was Lucia's where she says she first connected with "real food."

"Working at Lucia's was a turning point in my life, professionally and personally, because being able to have exposure to that kind of food helped me develop a healthy relationship with food, which I didn't really have before," she adds.

As a kid growing up in the Seventies and early Eighties, the child of two busy, working parents in the peak of the low-fat, no-fat craze, her meals came down to some ungodly combination of pseudo-"health" and, moreso, convenience. ("It wasn't farmers markets and CSAs, it was, 'What's in a box in the freezer that I can open up and microwave?'")

Singleton's never been shy about her love for Lucia's, and she isn't now. "When I opened, my business partner...she worked at Lucia's too. We both came from Lucia's. Lucia's informed the principles and values that this was founded on."

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There's the obvious: that other restaurants at the time weren't buying their food from farmers or putting an emphasis on making everything from scratch. But it was more than that.

"Aside from farm-to-table, the teamwork that was there, the respect that was there, the ethics that were there—it was a whole shift for me."

"A lot of us went through there—I was just thinking about it," adds Beth Fisher, now the executive chef at Uptown's French Meadow Bakery and Cafe, who worked at Lucia's in the late '90s. "Susan [Muskat] down at Moose & Sadie's; Paul Schula at Bev's Wine Bar. So many of us went through that kitchen. Some stayed for two years, some stayed for 15 years...there was no reason to leave."

Fisher remembers the way the pioneering chef would work beside you in the kitchen, the way she'd be right there next to you on the floor. How she always worked every bit as hard as—or harder than—every last one of her coworkers and employees. "And I think we all learned that, and went on to do our own things with that instilled in us. People really respect you when you're standing knee-deep in the line."

It was a kind of caring that didn't change when you left the kitchen. Singleton says they've remained friends and that Lucia has been a mentor of hers—always generous with her time and resources and advice—throughout her 22 years at the helm of Birchwood.

She agrees, too, with the essence of what the pioneering chef humbly told the Star Tribune earlier this week: that all good things come to an end. She doesn't know the people who purchased Lucia's a few years ago, or how that changed the restaurant overall. "I don't think it was the same as when Lucia was there," she says.

Fisher concurs. "As soon as it sold, it changed. Lucia was the soul of the place, to me. Everybody was trying to support it and make it happen, but I think running it from a business side instead of a personal, passionate side... it just leaked through in too many places."



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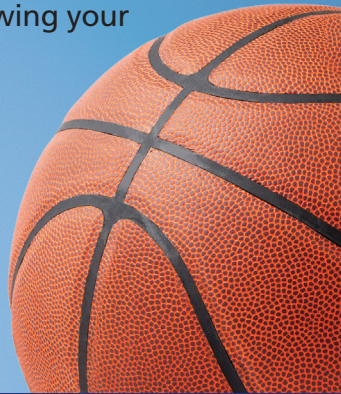
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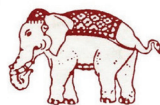


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As for what the loss of Lucia's means for the Twin Cities, Singleton notes that it's in no way the death of the farm-to-table movement (a term she doesn't love, by the way). In fact, more and more restaurants are embracing and emphasizing integrity in their food sourcing all the time. Still: "That's something that [Lucia's] started, and I think that will continue. At least it will at Birchwood.

"And still relevant. What she did is still relevant, I think. At least I have to hope so, because that's what we're doing.

"But it is," she adds. "It's the loss of an institution."

—EMILY CASSEL

Pizza pro Ann Kim brings on Paul Berglund in new venture

Young Joni has earned heaps of praise—both local and national—since opening late last year.

This paper called it the best new restaurant in the Twin Cities. Eater critic Bill Addison called it one of the 12 best new restaurants in the country.

There's just one tiny little problem: "That last project probably took nine years off my life," chef Ann Kim tells us, laughing.

Running the acclaimed Hello Pizza and Pizzeria Lola had been demanding enough for Kim and husband and business partner Conrad Leifur. And when two became three? Lord. It was out of the frying pan, into the Le Pan-yol wood-fired oven.

That's why, in late September, Kim announced that she was getting some help in the form of James Beard Award-winning chef Paul Berglund, who would join Vestalia Hospitality—that's the group she formed to oversee her three restaurants—as culinary director.

Berglund, who had been with Bachelor Farmer for the entirety of the North Loop eatery's six-year run, left last month to pursue other opportunities. And Kim's quick to clarify that his departure was self-motivated—this

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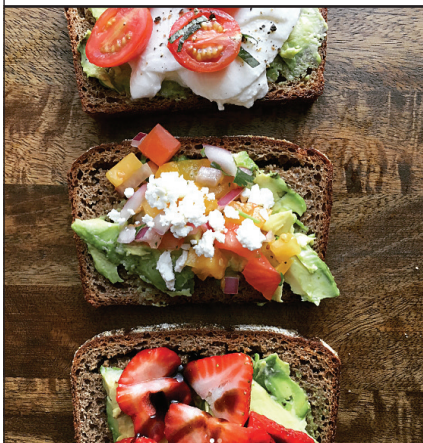
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isn't a poaching thing. (Not that the chef isn't a longtime fan of Kim's: "He's told us, point blank: Your restaurants are my favorite restaurants in the Twin Cities.")

The two have been friends and mutual admirers for years, and Kim describes Berglund as both immensely talented and extremely humble. "There's some chefs that just kind of wear everything on their sleeve...Paul probably has more talent than most people are even aware of, he's just really quiet about it," she says. "And that's kind of rare to find." More than that, the two share the same values, the same food philosophies. While she wasn't looking for a culinary director when their friendship was forged, they started to realize it just made sense to work together in some capacity.

Meanwhile, the Vestalia Hospitality team had been asking some pretty big questions. Were they done with three restaurants? Would they continue to grow? And what would that growth look like? Kim was burnt out on the business end, and she realized that to stay relevant not just now, but 15 years from now, she'd need more than one culinary head helping out.

But she's particular, and she wanted—quite frankly—someone who was talented enough to open a restaurant of their own.

"I want to create a strong organization, and that means hiring people that are talented, people that are smarter," she says. "That's how I feel like we're going to continue to be one of the best restaurant groups in the city and even in the country."

Of Berglund, she adds: "We really believe in him, and we really trust each other. There's not a lot of people in this town that I would trust with this."

Still, the decision to bring him on board has City Pages staffers wondering: Might there be another restaurant on the way sometime soon?

"We're going to take our time, but we certainly have ideas," Kim says. For now, though, she insists that she's focused on getting everything in place to ensure that her existing eateries are

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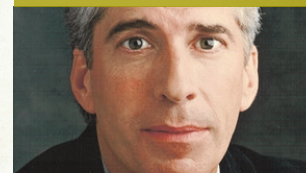
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—EMILY CASSEL

The Sioux Chef gets a river-front restaurant at the foot of the Stone Arch Bridge

At long last, Dakota culture will return to Owamni Yamni.

The Sioux Chef is set to open a restaurant in the forthcoming Water Works park in downtown Minneapolis near St. Anthony Falls (known as Owamni Yamni, or the “place of whirlpools” by the Dakota people). Chef Sean Sherman and his team seek to bring indigenous foods, made with native plants and ingredients, back to prominence.

The team, which is now up to 12 members, includes Anishinaabe, Mde-wakanton Dakota, Navajo, Northern Cheyenne, Oglala Lakota, and Wahpeton-Sisseton Dakota peoples. It comprises “chefs, ethnobotanists, food preservationists, adventurers, foragers, caterers, event planners, artists, and food lovers.”

“With the removal of colonial ingredients, our plan is to drive economic wealth back into indigenous communities by sourcing food from these growers first,” says Dana Thompson, co-owner of The Sioux Chef. “We look forward to sharing and enjoying these diverse and healthy foods with all communities.”

This will be the first brick-and-mortar project for the Sioux Chef, which has operated a food truck, Tatanka Truck, for the last two years. The truck is now on hiatus, but in the past, the mobile kitchen served a variety of wild rice bowls, as well as snacks and drinks that adhere to native food traditions, such as a cedar and maple tea. Sherman has also released a cookbook, *The Sioux Chef’s Indigenous Kitchen*.

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The restaurant will be the first of the Minneapolis Park System's food venues to operate year-round and with full service. Other venues, such as Sea Salt at Minnehaha Falls and the Tin Fish at Lake Calhoun, are seasonal destinations. In addition to the full-service restaurant, The Sioux Chef will serve casual, counter-service foods.

Water Works will be located in Mill Ruins Park, off West River Parkway. For those old enough to remember Fuji Ya's waterfront building, the new project will replace that structure, where the Japanese restaurant operated from 1968 to 1990.

—HANNAH SAYLE

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pretty basic: beef or pork? Fatty or lean brisket? Potato salad or Texas beans? Rest assured, you can't really go wrong.

There's a chance they might run out of something, since their motto is "we will never serve barbecue from the day before." Considering the meat takes about 14 hours to cook, just think of it as an opportunity to try something new.

Jordan Smith, a partner in the venture and owner of Black Sheep Pizza, StormKing's next door neighbor, says they aim to give people a "true Texas style barbecue experience in the North." The menu offers brisket, pulled pork, spare ribs, chicken, spicy sausage, and burnt ends, all priced by the half pound, Texas market style. All meats are hormone- and antibiotic-free, and smoked in oak in a smoker that can hold up to 700 pounds of meat at a time.

Prices range from \$6.50 per half pound for the spicy sausage to \$11 per half pound for the brisket and burnt ends. You can also opt for a combo, which gets you 6 ounces of meat, a side dish, pickles and jalapenos if you like, a few slices of raw onion, and a roll.

A one meat combo is \$11.50, two meats go for \$19, and three is \$25. StormKing is a "living wage/gratuity free" establishment, so you know exactly how much dinner will cost you.

The presentation is rustic, with food served on a small, paper-lined sheet tray. But it's all about the meat here, and the barbecue is fantastic. The brisket was melt-in-your-mouth tender, with a kiss of smoke that is tantalizing without being overpowering. It enhances the meat, but doesn't smother it. The meat is served sauce-free, but be sure to try the house sauce that sits on every table. It's a little sweet, a little spicy, a lot tasty.

The sides were worthy of the meats. They're slightly cheffy versions (in a good, not pretentious way) of dishes you'd expect to see at a neighborhood potluck. The creamy potato salad has



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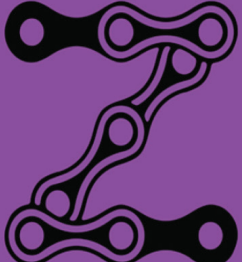
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The Texas beans are substantial, saucy and savory instead of sweet. The broccoli and bacon salad is nothing like the soggy version ubiquitous in delis. Don't miss the pies, either. We were too full to try it immediately after dinner, but we grabbed a piece to take home. Pies come from Pie & Mighty, a pop-up bakery, and options include a killer maple pecan pie and a seasonal berry pie.

Beer is a natural with barbecue, and the drink list offers a good selection of local brews on tap, as well as tall-boys. Wines are "red, white, rose, and sparkling." The restaurant also has an ambitious cocktail program. Try the Gin & Juice, a spritely combination of grapefruit juice, St. Germain, and Peychaud's bitters.

The decor fits the food. It's minimalist but homey. The menu is handwritten and posted on the wall and above the counter. There are about a dozen tables, all set diner-style with napkins, squeeze bottles of sauce, and a salt shaker. The small space was, once upon a time, a private party room for prior occupant Azia, and most recently an office for Smith's wife and business partner Colleen Doran.

Good news for those who want their barbecue to go but don't want to wait in line (or search for parking on the always-crowded corner): StormKing offers curbside service. You can order and pay online, and they will bring the food to your car. The city has granted them three parking spots for carry out. "I've met people in the alley, down the block, around the corner," says Forscherler.

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